

## Fish Consumption Advisories Are Still an Important Tool

By Chuck Warzecha, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services

While preparations are underway for a second season of PCB removal from the Lower Fox River, it is important to remind anglers that the fish consumption advisories are still in effect.

“It’s always good to remind those fishing the Fox to pay attention to the fish advisories,” said Public Health Educator Jim Morrison, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. “They remain in place because contaminant levels in the fish still limit what can be safely eaten.”

The sediment removal that began in Little Lake Butte des Morts last year marked an important step in the process to make fish from the Fox safer to eat. The cleanup work will take many years to complete. After that, it will still take awhile for PCBs in the fish to reach safe levels. During that time, the most important tool for protecting public health is awareness of these advisories.

Fishing on the river is as good as it has been in decades. Its improvement has drawn much attention from local anglers. In fact, the river’s reputation has spread rapidly, drawing anglers from around the country.

“If visitors are coming to the Fox Valley, they need to be aware that fishing should primarily be for the



*Fishing on the Fox River is as good as it has been in decades as the people fishing here near De Pere Dam well know, but anglers should practice catch and release.*

sport,” Morrison said. “Anglers should practice catch and release.”

Each year local health departments in the Fox Valley region, along with Wisconsin DHFS, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service do outreach activities aimed at maintaining awareness of the advisories in some areas. In other areas, that awareness needs to be increased.

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# Trustee Council to Fund More Restoration Projects

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Over \$900,000 will fund five natural resource restoration projects in the Green Bay area and on the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin reservation.

The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council recently added these to its list of projects. Eight others had previously been approved (January/February 2005 *Fox River Current*). The funding for these new projects comes from various natural resource damage assessment settlements with Appleton Papers, Inc./NCR Corp., Georgia-Pacific, Glatfelter, and WTM I (formerly Wisconsin Tissue):

- \$112,000 will be given to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the restoration of wetlands along the Fox River on the Fox River National Wildlife Refuge.
- \$157,000 will be given to FWS for the restoration of island habitat (wildlife homes) on the Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuges.
- \$40,000 will go to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the restoration of Wolf River wetlands in the Outagamie Wildlife Area.
- \$45,226 will be used by the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin for the reintroduction of wild rice in lakes on Menominee lands.
- \$559,939 will be used by DNR for the protection of critical habitat along the shores of Green Bay.

“Several of these projects have been in the files for a year or more,” explained

Colette Charbonneau, trustee council coordinator. “They were evaluated highly, but were surpassed by restoration projects closer to the Lower Fox River. It is important to restore habitat throughout the Green Bay watershed as outlined in the restoration plan.”

Funding for the last three projects still need approval from the Intergovernmental Partnership which is comprised of DNR, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, FWS, Menominee Tribe and Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin. Settlement money was originally split in half for restoration and cleanup projects. Since the trustee council wants to use some of the money earmarked for cleanup, the IGP must first give its approval.



*The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin will use \$45,226 for the reintroduction of wild rice in lakes on Menominee lands.*

# FWS Representative Takes Temporary Assignment

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Colette Charbonneau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trustee council coordinator, has accepted a short-term position in Washington, D.C.

Charbonneau will serve on the staff of the Department of the Interior working on its national restoration program through June 10. Her responsibilities will include developing marketing strategies, briefing congressional liaisons on the department's 2006 budget request, helping to draft national restoration policies, and working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to build environmental measures of success.

Although she will be far from her Green Bay, Wis. office, she will continue to spend about 20 percent of her time working on restoration projects in the Green Bay watershed. She will have access to her e-mail and voice mail.

She can still be contacted at (920) 866-1726 and at Colette\_Charbonneau@fws.gov. Greg Hill, trustee representative for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, will also help field inquiries regarding restoration projects until Charbonneau returns. He may be reached at Gregory.Hill@dnr.state.wi.us and at (608) 267-9352.

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Morrison continued, "As the fishery improves in popularity, it will be increasingly important for each of us to reach out and help others know how to enjoy it safely."

The increase in immigrant populations has meant the message to reach a more diverse audience must be broadened. It is important that everyone knows which fish from which waters are safest to eat. Health and environmental agencies have created multilingual promotional materials, participated in ethnic health fairs, and participated in educational forums to address these groups. Still, there are new faces every year representing people who need to know about the advisories. For many years to come, the search will continue for new and better methods for reaching these populations.

Advice for eating fish from the Lower Fox River and Green Bay can be found on signs at the shoreline and boat landings. This same advice is included in the full set of advisories on the DNR web site: [www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/fish/pages/consumption](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/fish/pages/consumption).



## Out and About...

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership is made up of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. These partners, as well as other supporting agencies, regularly provide speakers to organizations in the Fox Valley area. The following people recently made presentations:

### March

- ◆ *Jim Hahnenberg*, EPA: Weyauwega Middle School, Weyauwega; general Lower Fox River cleanup and PCB disposal methods.

### April

- ◆ *Greg Hill*, DNR: League of Women Voters meeting, Appleton; PCB disposal methods.

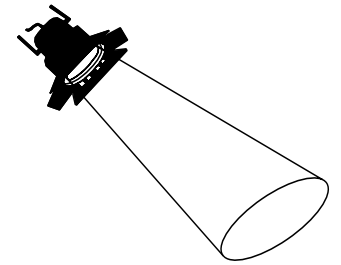


*The Fox River Current is featuring promising natural resource damage assessment projects in and near the Lower Fox River.*

# Spotlight On:

## Mink River, Sutter Tract Restoration Project

By Colette Charbonneau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



A request by The Nature Conservancy to restore a 15-acre parcel of land, referred to as the Sutter Tract, was granted by the Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council. The parcel, which is adjacent to the Mink River in Door County, Wis., included an old cabin built over a seasonal natural spring which flows to the river. The cabin site also included a well, septic tank, invasive plants and a springhouse (a small structure about the size of a dog house) which enclosed another seasonal spring. The plan is to return the entire area to a more natural environment using natural resource damage assessment settlement funds.

First, all necessary permits were obtained for site restoration. Proper well abandonment followed to prevent ground-water contamination. The closing of the well will also diminish any possibility for safety hazards to small children and animals.

Next, the cabin and springhouse were dismantled. "We looked for a contractor that would recycle as much of the building material as possible," stated Mike Grimm, northern Wisconsin science specialist for TNC in Sturgeon Bay. "The company we found collected all the metal for possible recycling and the wood will be reused to refurbish historical buildings."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

*Sutter cabin site before cabin removal. In August 2004, planning began for the removal of the cabin, well, springhouse and septic tank, and for the regrading of the site to approximate natural contours.*

Heavy equipment was brought in to remove the concrete block basement and septic tank. The entire cabin site was regraded to natural contours. An area nearby was used as a model since it contains similar seasonal springs flowing to the Mink River. The springs were now free to flow a more natural route to the river.

Finally, a work party of volunteers descended upon the site to plant native shrubs and young trees. They also seeded the ground with grasses and herbs. The soil was then covered with jute matting to protect it from erosion. Volunteers used herbicide to destroy some Japanese knotweed (an exotic, invasive plant)

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

*Last stages of the Sutter cabin removal. A contractor was chosen to do the work and recycle as much of the house material as possible.*

near the home site and removed trash from the edges of the woods. The remaining acres were planted with a variety of trees including oak, maple and pine. This is part of the TNC's larger Mink River Project. (More information can be found in the September/October 2004 *Fox River Current*.)

If you are in the Ellison Bay area of Door County this spring, take a drive down Mink River Road and stop to enjoy the newly restored Sutter Tract. Maybe, just maybe, the springs will be flowing.

The natural resource trustees are comprised of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oneida

Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Michigan Attorney General, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For further information on NRDA projects, contact Trustee Council Coordinator Colette Charbonneau, FWS, at [Colette\\_Charbonneau@fws.gov](mailto:Colette_Charbonneau@fws.gov) or at (920) 866-1726.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

*Sutter restoration—final review. At the end of October 2004, the cabin and associated structures had been completely removed and the site was stabilized by plants, seeding and matting. Eight acres of fields adjacent to the cabin site were growing young trees and woods were clear of trash.*

# Profile On ... Susan Pastor

## EPA Staffer 'Scouts' Out Information for the Community

By John Peterson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Despite the tremendous complexity clouding the Lower Fox River cleanup, Susan Pastor sees her job in the project very clearly – funnel the correct quantity and quality of information to people in a form most useful to them, whether that be through mailings, over the Internet, in public meetings or small groups. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency community involvement coordinator shrugs off what to others would look like an impossible task of reaching with effective communication thousands of people, each with a personal agenda. All are interested in the fate of the 37-mile-long stretch of the Lower Fox River heavily contaminated by PCBs.

“What’s interesting about the Fox is there are no reoccurring themes,” Pastor said. “You run into different ideas, different opinions as the project progresses or as you move along the river. What’s important to Green Bay residents may not be important to someone in Neenah.”

The 18-year EPA veteran was already well acquainted with Wisconsin before her assignment to the Lower Fox River in 1998. Pastor had been crisscrossing the state providing community involvement services to people living near some 40 Superfund sites. The Fox turned out to be a step up to the major leagues of Superfund areas.

“There are so many stakeholders,” she said. “It’s a challenge balancing business, the environment and recreation. Trying to make everyone happy is hard but at least I can make sure everyone is informed.”

When she moved from the “typical” Superfund sites to the Fox, Pastor also noticed a change in her audiences.



*Susan Pastor*

“The people strike me as very knowledgeable, very computer savvy,” Pastor said. “A lot of people have science backgrounds and a lot of students and college professors are involved.”

Pastor, 48, came to the project well-equipped for her public communication duties. The native of Chicago’s southwest side graduated from Southern Illinois University in 1978 with a degree in journalism. In 1984, she earned a master’s degree in management and development of human resources from National College of Education, now National Louis University. Pastor worked four years as a reporter for suburban Chicago newspapers and five years as an outreach professional for the DuPage County (Ill.) job-training program before joining EPA in 1987.

Fortunately for people concerned about the Lower Fox River, Pastor’s communication skills also included effective listening. She was attending a

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seminar on cultural resource studies at cleanup sites when she realized the river might qualify as a historically significant area. She convinced EPA colleagues to do an archeological survey on the river. Surveyors have since found hundreds of artifacts ranging from 19<sup>th</sup> century glass to bone fragments from what may be a prehistoric campsite. The cultural study will ensure the Lower Fox River's history won't be destroyed during the cleanup.

Pastor lives with her husband Mark, a professional photographer, in Chicago's western suburbs. When she's not running up and down the Lower Fox River, one can usually find her doing something with her three Jack Russell Terriers. She's a board member on the Midwest Jack Russell Terrier Club and works on breed education issues. Two of her pets are certified "therapy dogs" and she and her husband regularly take them to a rehabilitation hospital where the patients can enjoy petting them or watching them do tricks and obeying commands.

Although Pastor has no children, she is a lifetime member of the Girl Scouts with nearly 42 years of experience under her green belt. In the 1980s, she served as a troop leader and a chaperone to high school-age girls on a trip to Europe. Today, she trains leaders and presents American Red Cross first aid and CPR classes. She also represented her local council at the 2002 national convention in Long Beach, Calif. She said, "I started as a Brownie and never quit."

**Check out these Web sites:**

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/lowerfox/>

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/foxriver/>

<http://contaminants.fws.gov/Issues/Restoration.cfm>

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/nrda/index.html>

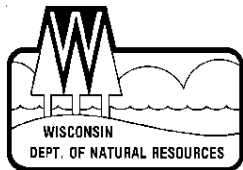
**Information Available at Local Libraries**

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets and other documents related to the Lower Fox River cleanup at information repositories set up in the reference sections of the local libraries listed below. Information repositories at the public libraries in De Pere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown have been discontinued. However, binders containing fact sheets are being maintained at these locations as well as at the following repositories:

- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton, Wis.; (920) 832-6170
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, Wis.; (920) 448-4381, Ext. 394
- **Door County Library**, 107 S. Fourth Ave., Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; (920) 743-6578
- **Oneida Community Library**, 201 Elm St., Oneida, Wis.; (920) 869-2210
- **Oshkosh Public Library**, 106 Washington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.; (920) 236-5205



*An administrative record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the final site cleanup plan was based, is also available for review at two DNR offices: 801 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wis. and 101 S. Webster St., 2nd Floor, Madison, Wis. An administrative record is also available at the EPA Record Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago, Ill.*



Prepared by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Supporting agencies include Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by all members of the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership.

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